

1. A method, comprising the steps of:  
providing a set of predetermined function definitions  
which are different; and  
preparing a project definition, said project  
definition including:

a further portion which includes a source portion identifying a data source and defining an output port through which data from the data source can be produced, and which includes a destination portion identifying a data destination and defining an input port through which data can be supplied to the data destination, data from said data source being transferred to said source portion through a network; and

2. A method according to Claim 1, including the step of configuring said network to include a portion of the Internet.

3. A method according to Claim 1, including the step of selecting locations for said data source and said source portion to be physically remote.

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7. A method according to Claim 5, including the step of selecting as said public communication protocol the File Transfer Protocol (FTP).

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11. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 10,  
wherein said program is operable when executed to  
facilitate said transfer of said data through said network  
in a manner conforming with the eXtensible Markup Language  
5 (XML) protocol.

12. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 10,  
wherein said program is operable when executed to  
facilitate said transfer of said data through said network  
10 in a manner conforming with the File Transfer Protocol  
(FTP).

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5           preparing a project definition, said project  
definition including:

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10 port that are functionally related according to the
    corresponding function definition;

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15 and which includes a destination portion identifying a data  
destination and defining an input port through which data  
can be supplied to the data destination, data received  
through said input port of said destination portion being  
transferred from said destination portion to said data  
20 destination through a network; and

25           14. A method according to Claim 13, including the  
step of configuring said network to include a portion of  
the Internet.

30     step of selecting locations for said destination portion  
and said data destination which are physically remote.

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16. A method according to Claim 13, including the step of causing said destination portion to convert data received through said input port thereof to a compressed format prior to transfer of the data through said network to said data destination.

17. A method according to Claim 13, including the step of causing said destination portion to effect said transfer of data through said network to said data destination in a manner conforming to a public communication protocol.

18. A method according to Claim 17, including the step of selecting as said public communication protocol the eXtensible Markup Language (XML) protocol.

19. A method according to Claim 17, including the step of selecting as said public communication protocol the File Transfer Protocol (FTP).

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20. A computer-readable medium encoded with a computer-program which recognizes a set of predetermined function definitions that are different, said program being operable when executed to facilitate preparation of a project definition which includes:

a plurality of function portions which each correspond to one of said function definitions in said set, and which each define at least one input port and at least one output port that are functionally related according to the corresponding function definition;

a further portion which includes a source portion identifying a data source and defining an output port through which data from the data source can be produced, and which includes a destination portion identifying a data destination and defining an input port through which data can be supplied to the data destination, data received through said input port of said destination portion being transferred from said destination portion to said data destination through a network; and

binding information which includes binding portions that each associate a respective said input port with one of said output ports.

21. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 20, wherein said program is operable when executed to cause said destination portion to convert data received through said input port thereof to a compressed format prior to transfer of the data through said network to said data destination.

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